and bad passions. Man is the most cruel of all creatures
on the face of the earth. In the words of Plutarch, " no
beast is more savage than man possessed with power
answerable to his rage/' And the plain truth must be stated
'that the most horrible tortures that have ever been devised
were intended by the priest-craft to maintain their absolute
power over ignorant people, as witness the record of " Holy
Inquisition " in the Christendom in Europe under which
thousands and thousands of innocent human beings, for the
matter of that, humble, devout Christians, were burnt alive
at the stake for so-called heretical views, and the unspeakable
tortures of *Suttee* in India (burning alive of Hindu widows
on the funeral pyre of their husbands). And to all these
physical horrors must be added the even deeper cruelty of
torturing the minds of men, women and children by threats
of eternal damnation in tlie flames of hell-fire under the very
eye of[t{] Our Father in Heaven [}) and " the Inexorable Yama "
(the God of Death). When the mandate went forth that
man was to be a moral being and endowed with a limited
• freedom of will, that he was to learn for himself the difference
between things good and things evil, step

by step, that he
was to learn by experiment, not by success
only but also by
failure, he was then and there foredoomed
to pass through an
ordeal of suffering such as only a God can
foresee. .

We also know that there are vast areas
of human pain
that are not caused by human sin. They are
caused by the
standing, enduring, universal laws of
nature—the regular
action of the primitive cosmical forces, as,
for instance,
in earthquakes, volcanic eruptions,
cyclones. These cosmical
laws sweep through all time and space.
Through them and
through, them alone has any universe at all
been evolved.
For us to stand "up and find fault with
gravitation or the
law of the refraction of light^ does indeed
seem a monstrous
specimen of conceit.. While to ask that
these laws and the
like should be suspended, wherever a
human being is in the